

## NOTES

# Module 1

# Targeted Mentor Recruiting



## Handouts

Handout #1: Session Goals and Basics

Handout #2: Agenda

Handout #3: Networking for Recruitment

Handout #4: Recruitment Brochure

Handout #5: Getting Out Your Message

Handout #6: Are You Ready to Provide Good Customer Service?

Handout #7: Recruitment Workplan

Handout #8: Same-Race vs. Cross-Race Matches

Handout #9: Resources for Targeted Mentor Recruiting

## Handout #1:

### Session Goals

To understand steps for building a network of local organisations that can help with targeted recruiting

To identify major elements of a message that “sells” your program to the particular volunteers you are trying to recruit

To be able to implement strategies for making all aspects of your recruitment and intake process appealing.

To begin to develop a systematic recruitment plan that specifies tasks, responsibilities, and timelines

### The Basics

1. Think strategically.
2. Be persuasive and persistent.
3. Provide good “customer service”—be sure your program is hospitable to the groups you want to recruit.
4. Remember that all recruitment is targeted in some way.



## **Handout #2: Agenda**

### **Activity #1 Introductions (20 minutes)**

Participants describe their program population and the mentors they are trying to recruit

### **Activity #2 Looking Out (25 minutes)**

Participants look at strategies for identifying and networking with organisations in the community that can help with recruiting

### **Activity #3 Developing a Message (25 minutes)**

Work in pairs to develop a targeted recruitment message.

### **Activity #4 Refining, and Getting Out Your Message (15 minutes)**

Pairs deliver feedback on their messages, and the whole group discusses ways to use the media to get out the message about their program.

### **Activity #5 Looking In (20 minutes)**

Participants identify characteristics of their organisation and of their mentor intake process that might be creating barriers to attracting specific groups of volunteers.

### **Activity #6 Beginning a Recruitment Plan (15 minutes)**

Participants brainstorm to develop a systematic process of targeted mentor recruiting for their programs.

### **Activity #7 Now What? (5 minutes)**

Participants discuss how they will apply information from this session when they return to their programs.

## Handout #3: *Networking for Recruitment*

Developing connections with organisations that have credibility in the community and with the groups you are targeting can help your program gain visibility and access to those groups of potential mentors.

The following pages list types of organisations that might provide connections for recruiting mentors; describe strategies for identifying those organisations in your community; and outline initial steps in the process of forming linkages with them.

### I. **Types of Organisations**

1. National organisations with local branches in your community—for example, ethnic organisations, professional organisations etc.
2. Local organisations – community based organisations, civic associations, advocacy groups, service groups.
3. Religious organisations.
4. Community neighbourhood organisations.
5. Clubs/associations whose membership predominantly includes the racial or ethnic groups you are trying to recruit.
6. Local businesses.
7. Volunteer agencies.
8. Other:

### II. **Identifying Organisations in Your Community**

1. *Ask staff, board members, and volunteers:*

What organisations they are involved with that might be a good connection for your recruitment efforts. In a formal or informal survey, ask about their past or present membership, board membership, or any other affiliation they have with local organisations, including religious organisations.



## Module One: Targeted Mentor Recruiting HANDOUTS

Whether they know more about, or have connections with, any of the organisations you have identified during your various searches (see below).

### 2. Use print sources, including:

The Yellow Pages of the telephone book. Look up “organisations” in the index. That will refer you to listings that may include:

- associations, clubs, political organisations, professional organisations, religious organisations, social service organisations, veterans and military organisations, and youth organisations and centres.

Directories available through local libraries or bookstores.

Your library might have directories of organisations for specific racial or ethnic groups. Many library catalogues are online. You can go to the library’s Web site and search the catalogue over the Internet, using key words like “directory” or “Indigenous organisations.”

Local newspapers.

Read community newspapers and newspapers that are aimed at the audience you are trying to recruit in your city. Through articles and press releases, you might discover organisations that you can connect with. (If the newspapers are in a language you cannot read, find a staff member, board member, or volunteer who can.)

### 3. Use the Internet

The Internet is a great source of information. You won’t find everything on it (you should use other resources as well), but you can collect a lot of information quickly. If you don’t have access to the Internet, find someone who is willing to do the searches for you. You can access information in several different ways:

- City or regional Web sites.
- Search engines - The most useful Web sites for this kind of search are probably Yahoo! ([www.yahoo.com](http://www.yahoo.com)) and About.com ([www.about.com](http://www.about.com)). They

will most likely lead you to information about national organisations, but those organisations may have local branches in your community.

## Connecting with Organisations

Once you have identified organisations that might be able to help you gain credibility with, and access to, the groups you are targeting, you need to begin the process of forging linkages with them. To do that, you can take the following steps:

1. Identify who should make the initial contact. Should it be the program director? A board or staff member? A volunteer with a connection to that organisation?
2. Arrange a one-to-one meeting to describe your program. Your goal for this meeting is to begin to build respect and trust. Be sensitive about who is representing your program at the meeting. Have a general, exploratory discussion rather than a conversation that focuses on recruitment.

Before the meeting, think through your own “selling points.” For example:

- Do you have staff or board members from that community?
  - In what ways has your program or organisation demonstrated commitment to and involvement in that community?
  - What successes has your program had so far?
  - What can you do for that organisation—that is, how can you help contribute to its goals?
3. Arrange to do a presentation on your mentoring program to members of the organisation, or just to its leadership. Have current volunteers and mentees take part in the presentation. Be sensitive about who is giving the presentation; be sure that at least some of the presenters are representative of that organisation’s membership.



## Handout #4: *Recruitment Brochure*

FOLLOWING IS AN EXAMPLE RECRUITMENT BROCHURE FROM  
PLAN-IT YOUTH MENTORING PROGRAM



sharing

## JASON'S STORY

Jason was a sixteen year old, year 10 student with below average school grades. He 'hated' school and was intent on leaving at the end of year 10.

Jason heard about the Plan-it Youth mentoring program through school and decided to try it out, in the hope that it would help him get a job. He was matched with Peter, a quiet gentleman of about 70. Peter had years of experience managing his own business and employing staff.

They spent a couple of hours a week together discussing the things Jason liked doing and what he was good at. Peter arranged for Jason to visit a few workplaces so that he could meet people working in the professions that interested him. Peter also arranged for Jason to do some work experience at a local shop.

After completing the mentoring program, Jason decided to go to TAFE and study Business Management.

Jason believes that Peter's involvement in helping him decide what to do has opened his eyes to the opportunities available to him. He has a lot more confidence in himself now that he has the support and attention from his mentor. Jason and Peter are still in contact and Peter has agreed to continue to be Jason's mentor until he gets the job he's studying for.

confidence

## PLAN-IT YOUTH PARTNERS

Plan-it Youth is a collaborative project between Central Coast Active Retirees and Mentors Inc., NSW TAFE Commission Board, NSW Department of Education and Training, Central Coast Adult and Community Education, the Hunter Valley Training Company, the Hunter Institute of Technology and the Dusseldorp Skills Forum.

Central Coast Active Retirees and Mentors Inc. work to:

- recruit volunteer mentors who can share their life skills
- provide quality resources for community mentoring
- build partnerships between community organisations

The Dusseldorp Skills Forum is an independent, non-profit organisation that is committed to supporting innovation in educational and workplace practices, by encouraging community participation.  
[www.dsf.org.au](http://www.dsf.org.au)

## CONTACT PLAN-IT YOUTH

For more information about Plan-it Youth's mentoring program, call the Plan-it Youth Coordinator on 02 4322 3022.

The Plan-it Youth office is located at Suite 4b, level 2  
120 Erina St, Gosford 2250  
(next door to the post office)



## PLAN-IT YOUTH

is a Central Coast initiative supporting young people by linking them with a mentor.



## PLAN-IT YOUTH

Plan-it Youth is a Central Coast initiative supporting young people in transition between school and work, through mentoring. Plan-it Youth brings together a range of local community groups who work for the benefit of young people.

### WHAT IS MENTORING?

Mentoring is the development of a one-on-one relationship where a more experienced person helps a less experienced person achieve their goals.

*"It's about something both simple and complex - two people of different ages and backgrounds talking together and learning from each other."* Jonathan Alter, Senior Editor Newsweek



*"My son was not really confident in himself, not very outgoing to make phone calls and talk to people over the phone. It's been good for him to have to do it and visit workplaces. He was surprised by how helpful people would be. He's had a chance to practice these skills and see what's out there. Now he's aiming a little higher."* Chris, Mother

commitment

trust



### WHY PLAN-IT YOUTH?

Research shows that young people who leave school early, are twice as likely to be unemployed at the age of 24 than those who have completed year 12.

Plan-it Youth offers young people the opportunity to plan for their future careers and find a positive pathway into employment. A mentor can highlight alternative pathways and open doors for new opportunities.

Plan-it Youth offers a structured program consisting of four stages, over twelve months:

- 1 Mentor recruitment and TAFE course**
- 2 Selection of students, introductions and matching with mentors**
- 3 Pathways planning and investigation project**
- 4 Ongoing mentor support**

### BECOME A MENTOR

All it takes to be a Plan-it Youth mentor, is a commitment to spend approximately two hours a week with your 'mentee' for the next twelve months.

### WHAT CAN MENTORS DO?

- Listen
- Assist with goal setting
- Help students recognise their strengths
- Be a sounding board for ideas and problems
- Make contact with employers
- Suggest possible courses of action.

*"My mentor is different from my mum or my friends. She's not a teacher and not family. She's like a friend."* Michael, Student

To support you as a mentor, Plan-it Youth has formed a partnership with TAFE, offering a short course in mentoring. The course is free and the skills you gain will be invaluable to you as a mentor and may even prove useful in other areas of your life.

Topics covered in the TAFE mentoring course include:

- conflict resolution
- effective listening
- mentor roles, rights and responsibilities
- employment and training opportunities
- confidentiality
- child protection legislation

## Handout #5: *Getting Out Your Message*

Look carefully at your local media to see where you should place your message. Identify which media are targeted to the same groups you are trying to recruit. If possible, get volunteer help from a local advertising agency or a public relations consultant.

Possible media include:

- Local television shows aimed at the particular audience you wish to reach.
- Targeted radio programs or stations.
- Local newspapers—and especially, local newspapers targeted to the group you are trying to recruit. Try to get the newspaper to run a feature story about your program.
- Community newspapers. Take advantage of the fact that they are understaffed and are looking for good copy. Write, or have a volunteer write, a good press release, identifying a good time and place for a photograph opportunity.
- Other organisations' newsletters. Ask churches, schools, colleges, universities and other organisations to run a notice in materials they send out to their members.
- Other:

In addition, to help create high visibility, place your posters and brochures in places where they will attract the attention of groups you are trying to recruit. Depending on the community, this could include grocery stores, restaurants, gyms—wherever your potential mentors may go.

And never underestimate the power of word-of-mouth recruiting. Ask current volunteers, current and former staff, board members, and everyone else you know to talk to people who might be interested in becoming a mentor in your program.



## **Handout #6: Are You Ready to Provide Good Customer Service?**

To ensure that your program feels “inviting” to whatever groups you are targeting for recruitment—and to identify barriers—review your policies, procedures, materials, and informal practices for cultural sensitivity and unintentional prejudices.

### **Reference Group/Steering Committee**

Is there diversity among your board members?

Can your board members help you develop linkages to the communities from which you are trying to recruit?

### **Recruitment Materials**

Do your general recruitment materials appeal to people from diverse educational and racial backgrounds?

Do you have targeted recruitment materials? Have you had them reviewed by people who represent the particular group you are trying to recruit? (One good approach is to have a focus group respond to the materials.) If you have translated your text from English into another language, have native speakers of that language carefully reviewed the text?

### **Outreach**

Who represents your program at community events? A member of the group (race, ethnicity, gender, age) from which you are trying to recruit?

Do you have mentors who are members of the group you are targeting and who will volunteer to do outreach in the community? (An additional benefit is that they will be able to talk about their own experiences as mentors.)

### **Phone Inquiries from Potential Mentors**

Who on your staff is responsible for responding to initial telephone inquiries from potential mentors? Are there guidelines for the staff member to follow?

Have you had a person who represents the targeted recruitment group review these initial telephone responses to ensure that you are giving the message you want to give?

## Orientation

Who presents your orientation session to potential mentors? Do current mentors participate, including people who represent the group you are targeting for recruitment?

Have you had your orientation presentation reviewed by people who represent the targeted groups?

## Interviews with Potential Mentors

Who on your staff conducts the application interview with potential mentors? How many interviewers should conduct the process? How might that staff member's race, ethnicity, gender, or age affect the "comfort level" of the person being interviewed?

Have you made yourself aware of cultural differences that can affect the way people of different races, ethnic backgrounds, gender, or generations respond to questions during a personal interview?

Have the interview questions been reviewed by people who represent the groups you are targeting for recruitment? (One possible approach is to have representatives from that group role-play the process with your interviewer and then discuss where the difficulties might be.)

## Screening Requirements

Have you reviewed your screening requirements to identify potential barriers to the groups you are trying to recruit? Examples might include requiring that the mentor have a car (when you are trying to recruit from a community where few people do); requiring a one-year commitment (when you are trying to recruit personnel, who might be transferred in six months); or requiring weekly one-to-one meetings (when you are trying to recruit people from a business that will provide "release time" for its employees only two or three times a month).

Have you examined any screening requirements that do present barriers to see if they can be modified—while being sure that you are not weakening program standards and that all mentors will be appropriate, committed, and safe?

Do you describe your screening requirements up-front to potential mentors and provide a clear explanation of why each requirement exists?

## Other:



## Handout #7: *Recruitment Workplan*

### A. Objectives

Number of new, matched mentors:

Other objectives:

Timeline:

### Action Steps

### B. Developing—and publicising—a recruitment message

Task	Person Responsible	Due Date
1.		
2.		
3.		
4.		

Next steps:



**C. Networking with other organisations**

Task	Person Responsible	Due Date
1.		
2.		
3.		
4.		

Next steps:



## ***Handout #8: Same-Race vs. Cross-Race***

Evaluations of volunteer mentoring programs provide evidence that mentoring relationships can have positive influences on adolescent developmental outcomes, including improvements in peer and parental relationships, academic achievement, self-concept, lower recidivism rates among juvenile delinquents, and reductions in substance abuse.

Only a few studies, however, have focused on the role of the mentors' and mentees' cultural background in shaping the course and outcomes of the relationship. As a result, critical questions remain regarding the role of race and ethnicity in matches and the relative importance of making matches on the basis of shared racial background. Because of the absence of systematic knowledge, considerable controversy surrounds this issue; and many programs act on implicit assumptions regarding the importance of forming matches on the basis of racial similarity between mentors and young people. One consequence of programs' decisions to make only same-race or same ethnicity matches is that thousands of minority young people will miss out on being involved in the program. Is a cross cultural match better than no match at all?

Based on beliefs rather than research, the arguments for and against cultural matching are deeply rooted in ideology concerning racial and ethnic relations. The two sides of the cultural matching argument are summarized below.

### ***In Defense of Cultural Matching***

Proponents of cultural matching firmly believe that one's racial and ethnic background plays a critical role in establishing effective mentor-mentee relationships. This shared background is emphasized over differences in social class or geographical location because it is assumed that problems transcend class and geographical boundaries. Without a similar racial background, the match is believed to be unable to fulfill its potential.

The arguments for cultural matching are deeply embedded in minority groups' historical experience in the United States, cultural legacies, customs and values regarding self-

protection. Proponents of racial matching often base their belief on one or more of the following assumptions:

- 1 An adult of a different racial and ethnic background cannot teach a young person how to cope in society since he or she cannot understand what it feels like to be a minority. Because minority young people internalise the racial and ethnic attitudes of the larger society, they are vulnerable to low self-esteem and have restricted views of their possibilities in life. Only a mentor with a similar racial and ethnic background can really understand these social and psychological conflicts and help frame realistic solutions.
- 2 Deep levels of trust, sharing and cooperation will never be realised unless there is a common bond of race or ethnicity.
- 3 Cross-race matches, where white adults mentor minority children, are an intrusion upon the community and a danger to the child's cultural identity. Culture is deeply internalised, providing racial and ethnic groups with a sense of history, heritage and continuity. Any mentor who is not representative of a child's racial or ethnic background will subconsciously and inevitably impose his or her cultural values and customs on that child.
- 4 White, middle-class mentors' primary goal might be to 'save' at-risk young people from the hazards of their environments by engaging them in 'mainstream' activities, thus impeding the development of a mentoring relationship that is built on trust and support.
- 5 Racial and ethnic communities should help their own and foster a sense of solidarity. Mentoring is an important mechanism for forging these ties.
- 6 Providing minority young people with mentors from a different culture will send the wrong message. It will convey to them that the people they should model themselves after are not of their own group, or that there are not enough adults from their own community who can serve as positive role models.



### ***In defense of Cross-Cultural Matching***

Most proponents of cross-cultural matching do not deny the existence and potential effects of culture on the mentoring relationship. While some proponents do believe that people should live in a 'colour-blind' society, this is by no means the majority opinion today. Rather, many who defend cross-cultural matching believe that effective relationships can develop despite racial and ethnic differences.

Proponents of cross-racial matching often base their belief on one or more of the following assumptions:

- 1 The qualities of the mentor are what matters the most. While racially and ethnically homogenous matching may expedite the development of trust, it does not guarantee a successful mentoring match. What is more important is the mentor's personal skills, experience, common interests with young people, capacity to provide sensitive support and openness to the nuances of cultural differences.
- 2 As long as mentors encourage their mentees to feel secure with their own cultural identity and remain constantly aware of their own cultural baggage and how it may affect their treatment of young people, then racial or ethnic similarity becomes less consequential. People who possess the characteristics of a good mentor can receive training that will help them develop this kind of cultural sensitivity.
- 3 Differences in socioeconomic status may be a more important concern than differences in race or ethnicity. Social distance may cause the mentor to misunderstand the young person's problems, needs and thoughts. Yet, skilled and sensitive mentors have succeeded in bridging these social distances and they can bridge racial and ethnic differences as well.
- 4 Rather than a liability, cross-cultural matching can be beneficial to young people by breaking down racial and ethnic barriers. By matching people of different backgrounds, it permits exposure to cultures that previously might have aroused negative or uncomfortable feelings.

- 5 Beyond the potential benefits to young individuals, cross-cultural matching can also contribute to the dismantling of societal barriers. It symbolizes people working together, trying to improve the life chances of young people and fostering a sense of community among historically separated people.

Supporters of these matches also emphasise that it is essential for the child's or young person's parent to give approval for the cross-race match.



## **Handout #9: Resources for Targeted Mentor Recruiting**

### **Manuals produced by Big Brothers Big Sisters of America**

These materials can be purchased from Big Brothers Big Sisters of America, 230 North 13<sup>th</sup> Street, Philadelphia, PA 19107, (215) 567-7000, [national@bbbsa.org](mailto:national@bbbsa.org):

*Because You Have So Much to Share: A Guide to Using Older Volunteers.* 1990. A comprehensive guide.

*Pass It On: Volunteer Recruitment Manual—Outreach to African-American, Latino/ and Other Diverse Populations.* 1992. A comprehensive guide.

*Recruiting College Volunteers: A Guide for Volunteer Recruitment and Management* 1995. A comprehensive guide.

“Targeted Volunteer Recruitment.” 1992. Overviews of specific strategies used by seven BBBS agencies.

### **Some useful Web sites**

[www.yahoo.com](http://www.yahoo.com)

[www.mentoring.org](http://www.mentoring.org)

[www.cyberymp.com/recruit.htm](http://www.cyberymp.com/recruit.htm)

Yahoo, a search engine.

The National Mentoring Partnership

Information on recruitment and links to other resources



Ask each group and have people share information on resources as they go. The support person could keep a running list if they wanted to.

